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AUTHOR Child, Jack
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ABSTRACT

A number of converging circumstances suggest that Antarctica may be a major object of geopolitical attention in South America in the decade to come. The Malvinas/Falklands crisis focused geopolitical attention on the South Atlantic and the chain of Southern (Austral) Islands which link the southern tip of South America to the Antarctic Peninsula. Factors contributing to the strategic and resource potential of this region are: (1) the speculation that there is oil and gas on or near the continent; (2) the great extent of living maritime resources (fish, krill, seals, whales); (3) the Drake Passage, considered an alternate route to the Panama Canal; and (4) the significance of the Antarctic Peninsula for control of South Atlantic sea lanes. Membership in the Antarctic Treaty System has continued to grow, giving more countries a stake in events occurring there. This geopolitical attention could acquire either a confrontational or cooperative tone. It seems likely that the South American nations will play a large role in the events taking place around Antarctic, and there exists possibilities for cooperative efforts in handling the resources of the Antarctic. (SM)

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ANTARCTICA: ARENA FOR SOUTH AMERICAN COOPERATION OR CONFLICT

BY

JACK CHILD

Paper presented at the XIV International Congress
of the Latin American Studies Association, New Orleans
17 March 1988

American University
Dept. of Language and Foreign Studies
4400 Mass Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20016

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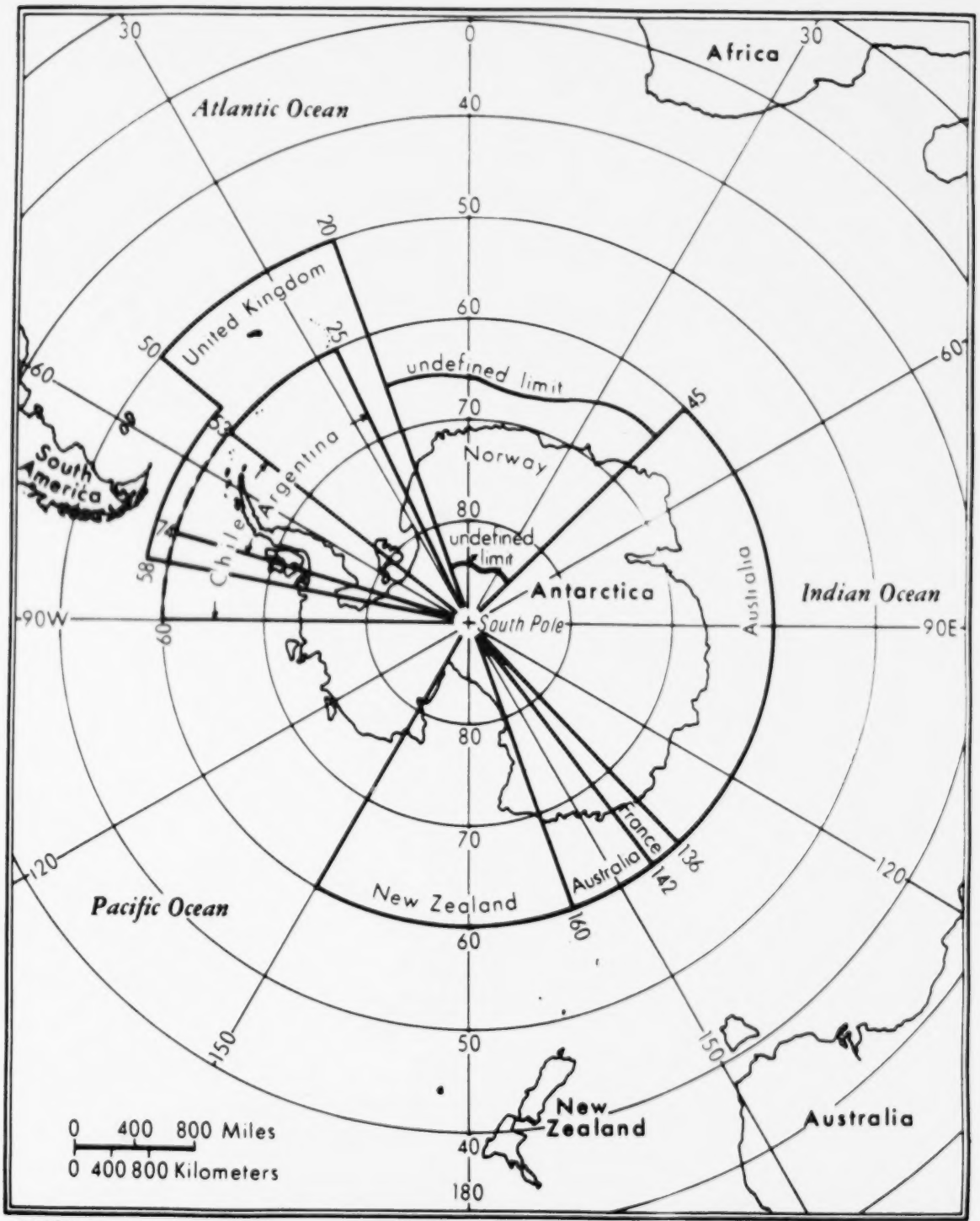

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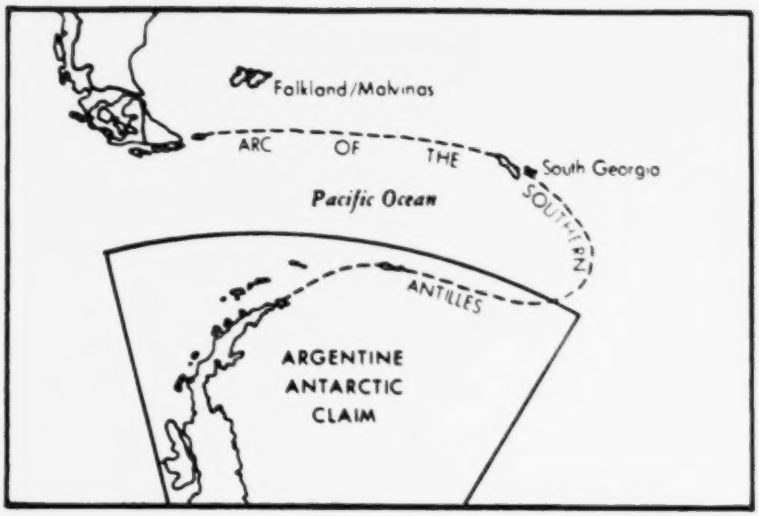
I. INTRODUCTION.

A number of converging circumstances suggest that Antarctica may be a major object of geopolitical attention in South America in the decade to come.

In part this is because many of the other long-standing foci of geopolitics on the South American mainland have found resolution or have decreased in priority. For example, the historic Argentine-Brazilian geopolitical rivalry, which was a driving force in South American international relations ever since Independence, has now apparently given way to a high degree of cooperation between these two key South American nations. Strains between Chile and Argentina over the Beagle Channel islands and surrounding waters were apparently resolved in the mid 1980's, thanks to Vatican intervention. And the uneventful passing of the Centennial of the War of the Pacific (1879-1883) has lowered tensions along the Pacific Coast of South America.

Further, the trauma of the Argentine defeat at the hands of the British over the Falklands/Malvinas Islands in 1982 led to the emergence of a strong current of Latin American solidarity. This current has addressed other issues such as the devastating debt problem and the need for Latin American integration in order to face up to outside pressures. Although probably not as strong or enduring as its supporters insist, there seems little doubt that South American and Latin American cooperation is reaching historic levels.

The Malvinas/Falklands crisis also focused increasing geopolitical attention on the South Atlantic and the chain of Southern (Austral) Islands which seem to link the Southern tip of South America to the Antarctic Peninsula in a long curving arc out to the South Sandwich Islands and then back. (See Map no. 1). The Brazilian initiative to make of this vast area a "Zone of Peace" met with rhetorical support from many sectors of Latin America and the Third world, but also served to reemphasize the strategic and resource potential of this region.



Map 1: The Arc of the Southern Antilles.
The Arc extends from Isla de los Estados to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, then back through the South Orkneys to the South Shetland Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula. Many Chilean geopoliticians argue that the Arc forms the natural boundary between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Such a division of oceans favors Chile at the expense of Argentina, since both countries accept the "bioceanic principle" that Argentina is dominant in the South Atlantic and Chile in the South Pacific.

Two other factors account for the increased South American geopolitical interest in Antarctica: resources and time pressures. The resources are more potential and speculative than real and exploitable, but the widely held belief that there is oil and gas on or near the continent is a powerful magnet. To a lesser extent, the proven reality of living maritime resources (fish, krill, seals, whales) is also of interest in a hungry world. The time pressures stem from a clause in the Antarctic Treaty which states that after a period of 30 years (i.e., in 1991), any of the consultative members can call for a conference to review the operation of the Treaty and possibly call for modifications, including new or expanded claims, or outright withdrawal from the Treaty System. This has given rise to a widely circulated misperception that the Treaty will end, or must be changed, in the next few years. Although this is not what the Treaty says, many articles in the popular and geopolitical press take the view that their nation must prepare itself for sudden changes which may occur in the ATS in the next few years.

Thus, there has been an observable tendency to shift some of the historic geopolitical currents of confrontation and cooperation off the South American mainland to the southern islands and the Antarctic continent beyond.

On the Antarctic continent itself a bewildering array of nations and interested parties have increased their presence in the past few years. There are states that claim large chunks of Antarctica as if they were sovereign territory, while others argue that they have grounds for similar claims, but refrain from making them for the present. There are now almost forty members of the Antarctic Treaty System, but these represent a range of interests. Third world nations, both from within and outside the Treaty System, argue that any economic benefit derived from Antarctica should be "for the common benefit of mankind". Meanwhile, various ecological groups advocate keeping the continent a "world park", forever preserved for science and a limited number of tourists.

The Antarctic Treaty System, that unique international political regime which stemmed from the scientific cooperation of three decades ago, now is no longer a "closed" club of the small number of nations which explored and studied it in the distant past.

The original 12 signatory parties (known also as "original consultative" parties because of their decision-making role in the System) were: Argentina*, Australia, Belgium, Chile*, France*, Japan, New Zealand, Norway*, South Africa, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom*, and the United States. The asterisks indicate the seven countries which had staked territorial sovereignty claims prior to signing the 1959 Antarctic Treaty. Under the Treaty, no signatory nation's claim is denied, but neither is it affirmed; no new claims can be made.

Later consultative parties were: Poland (1977), the Federal Republic of Germany (1981), Brazil (1983), India (1983) the People's Republic of China (1985), Uruguay (1985), Italy (1987), and the German Democratic Republic (1987). There are thus now 20 consultative (or full decision-making) members of the Antarctic Treaty System.

There are also now 17 acceding parties, which have a voice, but no vote, in Antarctic Treaty System deliberations: Czechoslovakia (1962), Denmark (1978), Peru (1981), Papua New Guinea (1981), Spain (1982), Hungary (1984), Sweden (1984), Finland (1984), Cuba (1984), South Korea (1986), Greece (1987), North Korea (1987), Austria (1987), and Ecuador (1987). These add up to total of 37 Treaty signatories.

It is interesting to note that the three principal geopolitical actors in South America (Argentina, Brazil and Chile) are all full-fledged members of the System, while other Latin nations with an interest in Antarctica (Uruguay, Peru, Ecuador, Cuba) are also members. Of these nations, Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Uruguay all have permanent year-round bases in Antarctica, while Peru and Cuba have consistently sent observers to work and live at the bases of nations friendly to them. Peru now appears to be seriously considering mounting a permanent base, and there is increasing interest in Ecuador (Mercado Jarrin, 1984).

The growing South American geopolitical attention paid to Antarctica and its surrounding waters could acquire either a confrontational or cooperative tone. The history of geopolitical tensions in South America suggests the likelihood of confrontation, especially between Argentina, Chile, and the United Kingdom. To these historical geopolitical rivalries in Antarctica one must add the newcomer Brazil, and thus the possible transference of the old Argentine-Brazilian geopolitical rivalry to Antarctica (de Castro, 1956; Menezes, 1982; Pinto Coelho, 1983).

On the other hand, the gathering strength of cooperative geopolitics in South America in the mid-1980's suggests that there may instead be a coordinated and integrated approach on the part of the South American nations. This current has always existed in South American geopolitics, but in the past has tended to be overshadowed by the stronger conflictive current. The prevailing current in South American Antarctic geopolitics may soon be a cooperative one.if it is linked to Latin American integration ideals, redemocratization trends, and resentment against perceived "colonialist" and exploitative outsiders (the United Kingdom and the United States), One cannot assume that this cooperative South American approach will bring peace and tranquility to the area, since it would have to face the firm opposition of the numerous other countries with a presence and interest in the so-called "American Antarctic Quadrant" running from the Greenwich Meridian to 90 degrees west. These countries now include the United States, the Soviet Union, Poland, the People's Republic of China, South Africa, India, and many others.

II. THE GEOPOLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ANTARCTICA.

Perceptions of the geopolitical significance of Antarctica are a function of distance. There is little geopolitical and strategic analysis of Antarctica in the United States, for example, where the interest focuses more on the scientific and ecological aspects. On the other hand, those nations closest to Antarctica, especially Chile and Argentina (but also to some extent Australia and New Zealand) do emphasize these geopolitical aspects, sometimes to the point of obvious exaggeration. There is also a tendency to make certain parallels with strategic aspects of the Arctic, despite some evident differences.

A region which receives considerable attention is the Drake Passage between the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula and the southern portion of South America. The South American geopolitical literature stresses the great strategic significance of this 600-mile "choke point", especially as an alternate route to the Panama Canal if it should ever close or be denied to a particular nation. This particular type of analysis tends to ignore the fact that there are a number of other means of transportation, and that controlling the Drake Passage is no easy matter because of the distances and difficult weather involved. The significance of the Antarctic Peninsula

for power projection into South Atlantic sea lanes is also frequently stressed, but this too ignores the reality that the major South Atlantic sea lanes, primarily the oil routes which bend around the tip of South Africa, are very far from the Drake Passage and the portions of Antarctica near South America.

South American geopolitical analysis in this area has tended to stress the significance of the islands between South America and Antarctica. These can be grouped into three categories: the southern South American islands, the islands of the Scotia Arc, and the Malvinas/Falklands. The southern South American islands have always affected Argentine-Chilean relations, but the period of greatest tension now appears to have been surpassed with the resolution of the Beagle Channel islands dispute. However, this settlement was not well regarded by many nationalistic Argentine geopolitical thinkers, who feel that the solution favored Chile too much, and that Chilean possession of the islands interrupts the continuity between continental, insular, and Antarctic Argentina (Levingston, pp. 28-29). The islands of the Scotia Arc (South Georgia, South Sandwich, South Orkney and South Shetlands) have geopolitical significance in terms of both possession and their value as markers of the boundary between Atlantic and Pacific. The country that possesses them is clearly in a better position to strengthen her Antarctic claim and to deny the claims of others. (At present Great Britain holds South Georgia and South Sandwich; the South Orkney and South Shetland Islands are within the Antarctic Treaty area and thus effective sovereignty over them is ambiguous). Furthermore, if the nation's logistical bases are distant, as in the case of Great Britain, the Scotia Arc islands can play an important role as intermediate support and staging areas for Antarctic activities. The Falklands/Malvinas have had an especially high geopolitical profile since the 1982 Anglo-Argentine conflict, and have long been an important element in Britain's Antarctic projection. Argentina does not need them to facilitate her Antarctic activities, but if she could deny them to Great Britain her Antarctic claim would be strengthened considerably. A recurring theme in Argentina geopolitical literature (and to some extent in that of other South American countries), is that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is keenly aware of the strategic value of the Malvinas/Falklands in terms of Antarctica, the Drake Passage, and South Atlantic sea lanes. The argument presents the thesis that United

States and European support for Great Britain in the war was due primarily to NATO's interest in having a base on the islands (Reimann, p. 56). The presence of many NATO nations in the American Antarctic Quadrant serves to confirm the suspicions of those inclined to support this concept. There are many references to "Fortress Falklands" in the South American geopolitical literature, with parallels being drawn to Gibraltar. The fact that Great Britain has not been able to convince any NATO allies to participate in the construction or manning of "Fortress Falklands", or that the forces involved are a drain to NATO commitments, does not persuade South American geopoliticians.

The renewed attention to the South Atlantic and Antarctica after the 1982 conflict has revived interest in the Antarctic implications of the so-called "South Atlantic Treaty Organization" (SATO), the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, and the South Atlantic Zone of Peace. SATO was initially floated in the 1960's, primarily by South American naval geopoliticians, as a way of filling the strategic vacuum which they perceived to exist in the South Atlantic. Although the U.S. showed some interest, the idea of a SATO never came to fruition because of the distances involved and the fact that to function effectively it had to include South Africa. The Rio Treaty is relevant because its boundaries extend east as far as the South Sandwich Islands, and south to the Pole. Argentina has always seen this as her geopolitical sphere of influence, and has reacted with concern to Brazilian geopoliticians who speak of their nation as having a special security responsibility in the area as far south as Antarctica. In fact, much of the Brazilian geopolitical justification for her growing Antarctic program relies on this type of analysis. It also relies on the sometimes bluntly stated argument that Brazil must protect this area since Argentina has clearly indicated she cannot (de Castro, 1983, pp. 29-34).. Running counter to this irritant in Argentina-Brazilian relations is the Brazilian initiative in the United Nations to declare the area a Zone of Peace, and to eventually prohibit nuclear weapons in the region. Argentine geopoliticians reacted somewhat ambiguously to this proposal. Although it favors Argentina by placing restrictions on British and NATO military activities, it also represents another Brazilian intrusion into an area which Argentine have traditionally regarded as within their sphere of geopolitical influence.

The Arctic parallel shows up occasionally in the Southern Cone geopolitical literature in terms of the transfer of strategic concepts from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern. Some rather imaginative articles have appeared which argue that the superpowers have designs for installing advanced weapons in Antarctica, and accompanying maps show the ranges of various types of nuclear-tipped missiles based in Antarctica (Inter-American Defense College, 1985, pp. 10-65). From a realistic military perspective, there is little purpose in placing such weapons in Antarctica because of the physical and political transparency of the environment. Perhaps even more significantly, other weapons systems, most notably the nuclear submarine, make the installation of such weapons in Antarctica obsolete. There are some superpower strategic interests in Antarctica, but these are relatively minor, and have to do with communications and data gathering for scientific and missile launching purposes.

South American geopoliticians have also stressed the significance of trans-polar air routes, which is also a concept carried over from the North. It is true that air routes over Arctic regions have considerable significance, and have shortened a number of transportation links. As a result, they have increased the attention paid to the region and served to develop it to some extent. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the southern air routes for the foreseeable future because the demand for travel between the southernmost nations of the Southern Hemisphere is minimal. Thus, plans for establishing air support facilities in Antarctica to facilitate flights from South America to Australia and New Zealand have floundered in the face of very low commercial need for such routes.

A number of geopolitical analyses of the meteorological and ecological implications of Antarctica also seem to be unrealistic. It may well be true that Antarctica exercises significant influence on the climate of the Amazon, and on the creation of important phenomenon such as the "El Nino" current in the Pacific Ocean, but it is not clear what geopolitical significance this fact may have.

Issues of resource geopolitics have a more realistic base, but even here the prospects for any economically exploitable resource must be tempered by the realization that the resources have not yet been proven. Even if they are, their commercial exploitation must await technology yet

to be invented, and world prices which would have to be much higher than the present ones.

None of these arguments based on military or economic reality have persuaded the South American geopolitical writers to diminish their interest in Antarctica and the surrounding waters and islands. The presence of the superpowers and their allies in the region, and especially on the nearby Antarctic peninsula, stimulates their interest and suggests to them that there must be something important here or these major powers would not be troubling themselves. There are suspicions that the Soviet Union or the United States are busily prospecting for oil and precious minerals under the guise of science. Even presumably purely scientific projects such as investigating the ozone "hole" or collecting data to support space exploration are suspect. In the final analysis, the key variable of geographic proximity continues to exert its geopolitical magic: the nations that are close to Antarctica (and this is especially true for Argentina and Chile) are unwilling to relinquish the feeling that they have a special role in "their" Antarctic territory, and that the presence of outside nations, no matter how strongly supported by history and science, is going to come under close and suspicious scrutiny. South American geopolitics also has a strong tradition of futurology, looking ahead to the day when technology and the petering out of resources elsewhere on the globe may fully justify all their interest in the resources of Antarctica and the southern oceans.

III. NATIONAL GEOPOLITICAL APPROACHES TO ANTARCTICA.

A. Argentina.

An understanding of Argentine geopolitical approaches to Antarctica is fundamental because of that country's long Antarctic history, and because Argentine Antarctic geopolitics tends to shape the Antarctic policies of several other South American nations. There is a strongly developed "Antarctic consciousness" in Argentina, and a deeply held belief that the nation will never be complete until the various parts of Argentina (South American, Insular, Antarctic, and the Argentine Sea) are under full Argentine control.

Argentine geopolitical analysts stress the strategic implications of the proximity of Antarctica, and Argentina's special role (along with Chile) as guardian of the Drake Passage from Atlantic to Pacific. This interest has

naturally tended to focus on the Antarctic Peninsula (called "Peninsula de San Martin" by the Argentines) which is the site of the principal Argentine bases (Fraga, 1979).

In the drive to strengthen her Antarctic position, Argentina has taken innumerable steps to increase her presence and undertake administrative acts which might someday be useful in defending her claim. Over the years these activities have included scientific observations, operation of radio and postal stations, the establishment of colonies with families, the birth of Argentine citizens in her Antarctic territory, the maintaining of a civil registry for birth deaths, marriages, and other events, and the inclusion of geopolitical arguments for sovereignty in the national school curricula and popular media.

The Malvinas/Falklands conflict served to renew Argentine geopolitical interest in the south, and yet oddly enough has seemed to diminish some of the intensity of feeling regarding "Argentine Antarctica". There seems to be a growing realization that making good an Antarctic sovereignty claim is not very realistic, and may alienate a number of important allies whose support is needed on the Malvinas issue. Thus, there is cautious but intriguing discussion regarding the sharing ofAntarctic sovereignty with other Latin American nations under Argentine leadership (Escude, 1984, pp. 86-89, 160-165; Rozitchner, 1985, p. 121-122; Leal, 1983, pp. 14-17).

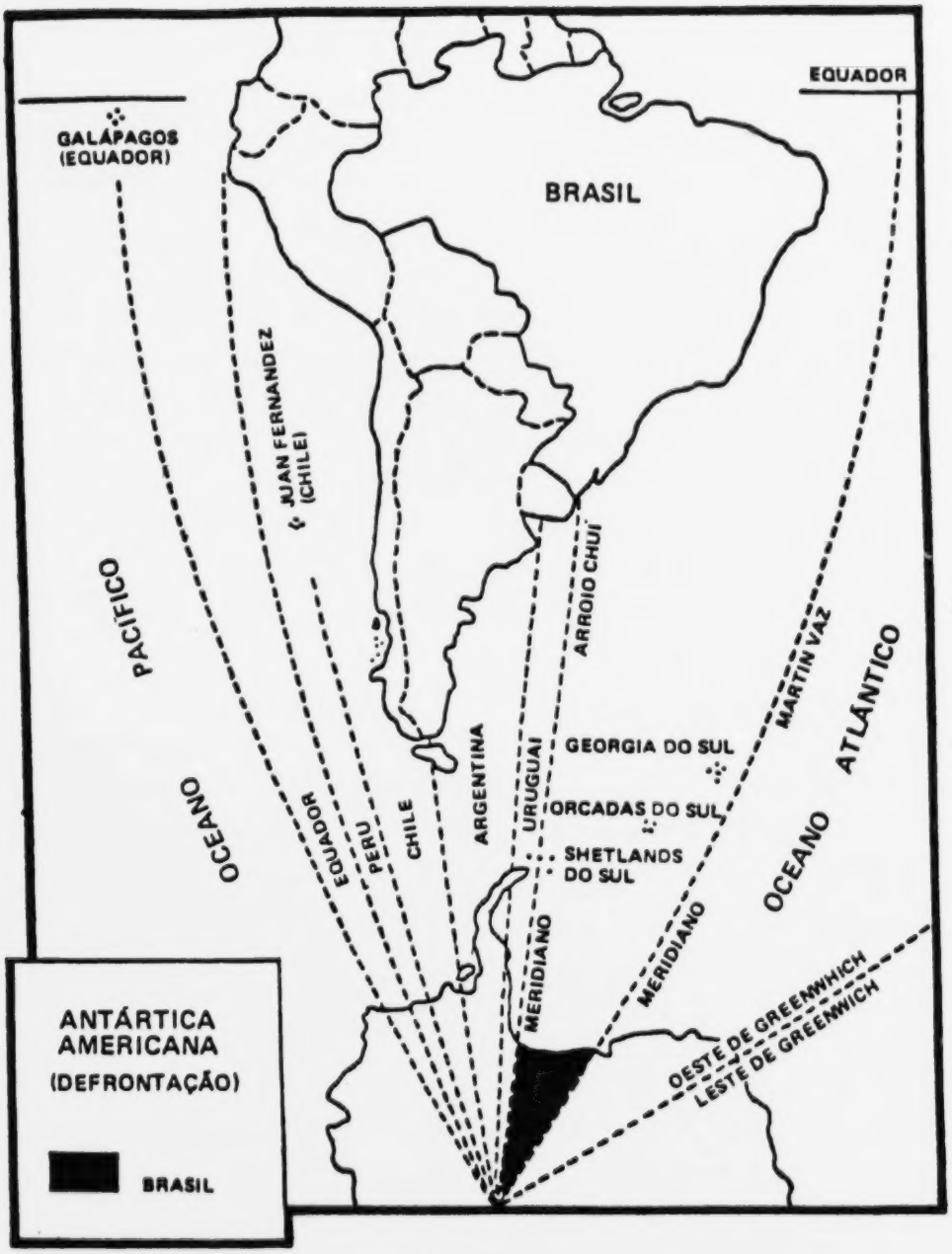
This cautious possible flexibility on Antarctic geopolitical issues is also a reaction to a series of challenges to Argentine interests in the Antarctic.

Chile poses one set of challenges, with her equally long Antarctic history and presence, and her powerful sovereignty arguments based on propinquity and uti possidetis. Chilean-Argentine geopolitical rivalry has had an important impact on their sometimes strained international relations, especially on border issues such as the demarcation of the frontier along the Andes, possession of the Beagle Channel Islands, and drawing the dividing line between Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. It should therefore not be surprising that this rivalry shows up in the Antarctic as well. And yet there are also currents of geopolitical cooperation with Chile, most notably the spirit of a 1948 bilateral agreement in which the two countries mutually recognized their Antarctic interests and sovereignty

rights, although they were not able to reach any agreement on the limits of their respective overlapping claims. The settlement of the Beagle Channel Islands issue in 1985 opened the door for possible greater cooperation in Antarctica, especially if it were to be framed in terms of Latin American solidarity as a means of blocking outside penetration of South American Antarctica.

A different set of geopolitical challenges are posed by Great Britain. The effective British control of the Falklands/Malvinas, South Georgias and South Sandwich Islands has clear implications for British Antarctic interests. As a result, one basic Argentine objective in attempting to obtain these islands from Great Britain is to strengthen her Antarctic claim at the expense of Great Britain's. On two other archipelagos within the Antarctic Treaty limits (South Orkneys and South Shetlands) Argentine and British installations exist almost side by side along with those of several other nations. This is a tribute to the effectiveness of the Antarctic Treaty System, but it is also as a warning of some of the implications of a possible breakdown of the System. Argentine concern over British Antarctic and South Atlantic challenges also includes the disquieting possibility of an informal alliance or understanding between Great Britain and Chile, who could be said to share a common geopolitical adversary in the shape of Argentina. (New Statesman, pp. 8-10).

A more recent geopolitical challenge to Argentine Antarctic interests has been posed by Brazil. The Argentine-Brazilian geopolitical rivalry is of course an historic one going back five centuries to strains between Spain and Portugal. But it has only been in the past few years that Brazil has taken an active interest in Antarctica and in so doing has undercut Argentine possibilities in that region. The intriguing facet of Brazil's challenge is that it grew out of a purely geopolitical concept: the idea of dividing up the South American Antarctic Quadrant into "frontage" sectors. As shown in Map 2, these would be derived from the open (i.e., unobstructed) meridians which six South American nations could project to the South Pole. The net effect of this frontage approach is to severely cut into the Argentine and Chilean sectors by awarding a large sector to Brazil, and lesser sectors to Uruguay, Ecuador and Peru. The idea is especially appealing to Brazilian geopoliticians because it undermines the Argentine sovereignty claim (as well as the Chilean), and suggests that Uruguay, Peru and Ecuador might also



Map 2: The Brazilian "Frontage" Theory.
This geopolitical concept argues that each South American country with an "open" (i.e., unobstructed) set of meridians to the South Pole should have an Antarctic sector defined by those meridians. The net effect is to give Brazil the largest sector, and also to assign sectors to Uruguay, Peru and Ecuador, all at the expense of the sectors claimed by Argentina and Chile.

have Antarctic possibilities if they support Brazil and not Argentina and Chile. It is doubtful that Brazil is seriously suggesting that these six nations might have sovereignty claims, but rather is simply trying to weaken the Argentine-Chilean sovereignty position by bringing in other Latin American nations. Thus, the end result of this Brazilian geopolitical approach may be to strengthen the Latin American condominium idea under which she would play a major role as the emerging regional power. The numerous recent bilateral agreements between Argentina and Brazil suggest that a new and unprecedented era of cooperation between these two countries may be beginning. If so, Antarctica may be one arena for this cooperation at the expense of Argentina's territorial claim.

B. Chile.

Geopolitical thinking in Chile has had great influence in many domains of government and the private sector, especially since under the military regime which was installed in 1973. President/General Augusto Pinochet is Chile's pre-eminent geopolitician, and under his administration Chile's Antarctic policy has been strongly conditioned by geopolitical principles. This recent emphasis is not, however, the starting point for Chilean Antarctic geopolitics. Historians would argue that since the days of Independence Chileans have been forced by their unique geography to be very sensitive to the limitations and possibilities posed by their space, and that this has naturally led to an important role for geopolitics in national affairs.

Like the Argentines, the Chileans base their Antarctic interest and sovereignty claim on a number of arguments, including several with a strong geopolitical component. Thus, there is a concept of a Tri-Continental Chile (South American, insular, and Antarctic), tied together by a "Chilean Sea" in the South Pacific. Overlapping Antarctic claims with Argentina, the Beagle Channel issue, and the problem of whether the Atlantic-Pacific dividing line follows the Scotia Arc or not, have all led to geopolitical tensions with Argentina (Marini, 1984; Leoni Houssay, 1984, pp. 5-20).

Although both countries are obviously the closest Latin American nations to Antarctica, Chile beats out Argentina because of possession of the Cape Horn and Diego Ramirez Islands in the Drake Passage. Thus, a consistent theme in Chilean geopolitics is her special status as "the

southernmost nation in the world". Chile's first geopolitical journal was appropriately called "Terra Australis" (Southern Land), and contained numerous articles stressing the need for the nation to be more concerned with her Antarctic interests.

The matter of geological and oceanographic continuity between South America and Antarctica via the Scotia Arc is another major theme in Chilean geopolitical writings, and is presented in such a way as to support the concept of the Scotia Arc as the natural divider. This effectively undermines the Argentine position and strengthens the Chilean. Significantly, the Chilean Antarctic claim, unlike the Argentine, does not have a northern limit. The reason, according to Chilean geopolitical writers is that there is a continuity between the three Chiles which does not require or permit such a boundary (Marull Bermudez, 1978, pp. 27-34; Cañas Montalva, 1979, pp. 89-118).

Chilean geopolitical thinking has a strong maritime component. Her independence was partly won by naval battles, as was the major post-independence achievement of the XIXth Century, the successful War of the Pacific against Bolivia and Peru. Toward the end of the Century Chile was the major naval power in the subregion, to the point that her statesmen referred to the south-eastern Pacific as "a Chilean Lake". This maritime interest has also focused on the three inter-oceanic passages which lie between mainland South America and Antarctica: the Strait of Magellan, the Beagle Channel, and the Drake Passage. Chilean geopolitical doctrine argues that Chile is the natural "guardian of the doorway" between Atlantic and Pacific, and that therefore these three inter-oceanic passages must, to the extent possible, be in Chilean hands. To hold the other side of the doorway (ie, the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula) strengthens the validity of this argument.

Like Argentina, Chile has a well-developed program of Antarctic activities that include science, administrative acts, radio stations, postage stamps, tourist activities, and the establishment of colonies. Chile's military has full control of the nation's Antarctic activities, and her Antarctic bases bear a striking resemblance to military installations (Parfit, 1985, p. 270; personal observation, Teniente Marsh Base, Antarctic Peninsula, 1986).

Under the Pinochet regime Chile is especially sensitive to the presence of the Soviet Union and several of her allies, including Cuba, in her claimed sector. There is much suspicion that Cuban and Soviet fishing boats in the South Pacific conduct espionage activities or logistically support armed subversive groups inside Chile. In the South Shetland Islands along the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula there are relatively few ice-clear areas, and as a result many nations tend to concentrate their activities in just a few choice spots. On King George Island this has resulted in the placing of a Chilean, a Chinese (PRC) and a Soviet station (with Cubans) next to each other. While relations are correct between these nations, there is also the potential of an incident arising from this close contact (Chile, INACh, 1984, pp. 59-62).

C. Brazil.

As indicated above, Brazil is the relative newcomer to the Antarctic arena of South American geopolitics. Her physical presence in the Antarctic Peninsula, and her evolving Antarctic interests, are related to her perceived role as an emerging regional power with security and economic interests to defend in the broad region of the South Atlantic and the Antarctic Continent. The first Brazilian Antarctic expedition was mounted in 1982, and her acceptance as a full consultative member of the Treaty System came the next year. However, her geopoliticians were speaking of Brazil's Antarctic interest three decades before, and indeed it is to their credit that Brazil became directly involved in the continent.

Much of that involvement stems from the power if a single geopolitical concept: "defrontação" (frontage), which formed the basis for a possible Brazilian sector, and which has undermined the strength of Argentine and Chilean territorial claims while at the same time appealing to Uruguay, Peru and Ecuador as partners in a South American Antarctica.

The frontage theory was bitterly attacked by Argentine (and to a lesser extent Chilean) geopoliticians (Rodriguez, 1974), who immediately saw it as a threat to their national geopolitical interests in the region. Although the frontage sector was never officially accepted as the position of the Brazilian government, it frequently appears in the Brazilian popular media and the specialized geopolitical publications. Further, it was advocated by a number of Brazilian geopolitical thinkers who played key

roles in military governments from 1964 to 1985. Like the Pinochet regime in Chile, these governments were strongly influenced by geopolitical ideas, and the basic one was that Brazil had a geopolitical destiny of greatness as a potential world power. To reach that greatness she had to first become a credible regional power, and this meant projecting national influence in the Southern Cone of South America and beyond.

Brazil's distance from Antarctica places her at a disadvantage in terms of the potential rivals Argentina and Chile. Brazil has no serious historical claims in the South, except a possible tenuous one stemming from the Treaty of Tordesillas. Proximity arguments are not useful, although some authors claim that Brazil's climate is strongly influenced by Antarctica.

Absent these arguments which are relied on by Argentina and Chile, Brazil is forced to fall back on the frontage theory and the idea that the Rio Treaty gives her a responsibility for the defense of the South Atlantic. There is also a geopolitical "coastline" argument which says that since Brazil has the longest Atlantic coastline of any nation, she has a natural need and responsibility to secure the waters off that coastline, and this therefore takes her to the far South Atlantic and to Antarctica. The NATO-SATO argument is also used, presenting the South Atlantic as a strategic vacuum which must be filled by the regional powers lest the superpowers move in.

Brazilian geopoliticians speak of a three-pronged national interest in Antarctica: security, ecology and economics (Azambuja, 1982, p. 275; Ibsen Gusmao Camara, 1982, pp. 22-23). The economic argument is based on current fishing activities, and the possibility of a major energy source being developed in Antarctica. This would be of great interest for Brazil, which sorely lacks reliable energy resources to fuel her industrial development. Even though the realists acknowledge that any such Antarctic energy would be a long time coming, they feel that Brazil must be well positioned for possible exploitation in the future (Leal, 1974, pp. 8-12; Moneta, 1981, pp. 52-53).

Brazilian Antarctic geopolitical analysts, like their Chilean counterparts, express concern over the presence of the Soviet Union and her Warsaw Pact allies in "South American Antarctica". Recent articles have included maps showing how the Soviets and their allies have positioned

their bases in Antarctica in a series of "strategic triangles" which are mutually supporting and could in time of war serve to project power toward the South Atlantic, the Drake Passage, and other key inter-oceanic routes (de Castro, 1984, pp. 85-94).

D. Other Latin American Nations.

The Antarctic geopolitical interests and activities of other Latin American nations lags far behind that of the three considered above, for reasons of distance, capabilities, and lack of solid and consistent geopolitical doctrine which has focused on Antarctic issues.

Uruguay has sent military personnel to Antarctica at the invitation of several nations with established bases and programs (mainly Chile and the United States). Her first base was set up in 1984, and she was accepted as a consultative party in the Treaty System in 1985. However, her Antarctic activities are minimal, and lack the extensive support system which has been set up by Argentina, Chile and Brazil. Uruguay's limited Antarctic activities are also a function of the geopolitical reality that she has always been a small buffer state caught between the two largest states of the Southern Cone: Brazil and Argentina. Perhaps because of a desire not to offend either neighbor, Uruguay's Antarctic activities have not stressed the frontage theory, but rather a pragmatic approach to being present in the region in collaboration with close neighbors. Much of Uruguay's South Atlantic and Antarctic interest has a historical base in the fact that Montevideo was favored over Buenos Aires as a port by the Spanish because of heavy silting problems on the Argentine bank of the Rio de la Plata. The Spanish established their main "Apostadero" (naval staging base) for the region in Montevideo, and many of the expeditions and sealing activities to the Malvinas/Falklands and the far South Atlantic came out of Montevideo (Fraga, p. 74). Uruguayan geopolitical thinking is also characterized by a strong integrationist streak, and this current shows up in Antarctic matters in terms of the arguments for a cooperative South American approach to the area (Crawford, 1982, pp. 34-43; Vignali, 1979).

Geopolitical thinking regarding Antarctica has recently received considerable impetus in Peru, and has stimulated official and popular interest to the point where it appears likely that Peru will soon have a permanent base in Antarctica (Mercado Jarrin). This is especially

noteworthy because geopolitical thinking in Peru took a different course than in Chile and Argentina, focusing on internal development issues much more than on external power projection. Like Brazil, Peru has little historical basis for a possible claim, and as a result Peruvian Antarctic geopolitical thinking takes a strong interest in the frontage theory, although its origin is attributed to Canadian, and not Brazilian sources. Frontage would give her a sector at the expense of Chile's claim. Peru's relations with her two South Pacific neighbors (Chile and Ecuador) have historically been difficult, and the press coverage of Antarctic interests has reflected these strains, especially when sensational headlines are used which accuse neighbors of coveting "Peruvian rights in the Antarctic". In addition to frontage arguments, the Peruvians argue that the Rio Treaty and ecological concerns justify her interest in Antarctica. The ecological argument is of special significance because the cold Humboldt Current which is born in Antarctic waters has a considerable effect on Peru's climate and fishing industry.

Ecuador at present has only a theoretical interest in Antarctica, although she was accepted as an acceding member of the Antarctic Treaty in 1987. Her interest, like Peru's, is based on the frontage theory, but in the Ecuadorean case the frontage would be derived from the Galapagos Islands which lie some 600 miles out in to the Pacific. The frontage stems from a 200 mile exclusive economic zone drawn around the islands. In terms of the geopolitical literature, the Antarctic theme appears sporadically in Ecuador, mainly in the Army's geographic magazine and some international relations texts (Villacres Moscoso, 1984, pp. 27-30).

Cuba has an active Antarctic presence thanks to the Soviet Union, which regularly hosts a few Cuban scientists or medical personnel at its Antarctic bases. The Cuban flag flies below the Soviet's at the Bellingshausen station (King George Island), much to the irritation of the Chileans only a hundred yards away.

Several other Latin American nations have expressed interest in Antarctica, but generally as part of the Third World current to make Antarctica's economic benefits "the heritage of all mankind" by denying sovereign or frontage approaches. These ideas have found their most favorable outlet in the General Assembly of the United Nations, which has included Antarctica as an agenda item since 1983. The Latin American

nation most involved in this effort has been Antigua & Barbuda. Suriname, Mexico and Bolivia have also expressed similar opinions (United Nations, 1984).

IV. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES.

The wide range of interests and nations involved in the South American Antarctic Quadrant suggest that a number of possible outcomes may emerge as the psychologically significant year of 1991 is reached and passed. These outcomes can be grouped as follows:

A. Cooperative outcomes, in which general agreement among the key players manages to avoid serious confrontation. Given the vested interest in the Treaty System by the superpowers and other member nations, the most likely outcome of all is probably a continuation of the present Antarctic Treaty System (ATS). This outcome would be enhanced if the ATS were gradually expanded to accommodate new members active in Antarctica, and even more so if an effective way of controlling mineral exploitation (the so-called "minerals regime") can be negotiated. But enlargement of the ATS cannot continue indefinitely or it will become a mini-UN, with all the discord and inefficiencies that such an outcome would entail. Two other cooperative outcomes, the internationalization ("legacy of all mankind") and the ecological ("world park") seem unlikely due to opposition by the ATS members and especially by the superpowers and the territorial ATS members.

B. Conflictive outcomes would result either from a breakdown of the ATS, or from polarization among the various nations with strong Antarctic interests. It does not seem rational that any nation would deliberately want to bring down the ATS, but as the 1982 Anglo-Argentine War illustrates, rationality may succumb to jingoism fed by highly nationalistic geopolitics. Under this scenario one nation might take unilateral actions to make good its Antarctic claim, or to establish control over a valuable resource. There may also be clashes between any two countries with Antarctic interests and presence, perhaps over a minor incident. Or there may be polarization between the ATS members and the excluded nations.

C. Mixed outcomes would involve cooperation between certain groups of countries which would then use their increased power to face outsiders. A South American (or Latin American) Quadrant Condominium would be an

example; the nations in the Quadrant would cooperate in Antarctica and share any economic benefit, but would have to confront the excluded nations in the process. As this Chapter has suggested, there is a strong current in South American geopolitical thinking which argues for just such a cooperative approach; rarely does this type of thinking assess the problem of confronting the excluded nations, which would mean the United States and the Soviet Union, among others. Other mixed outcomes might be the frontage sector approach pitting Brazil and her three frontage partners against Argentina and Chile (and other non-Hemispheric powers). There could also be cooperation between certain sets of nations (Argentina-Chile, Argentina-Brazil, Argentina-Chile-Brazil, Chile-Great Britain), a situation which would strengthen the Antarctic positions of the nations involved, but which would also almost inevitably lead to confrontations with others.

Whatever the actual outcome, it seems clear that the South American nations will have a say in the process, especially if the outcome is influenced by incidents, activities or resources in the area most likely to witness them: the Antarctic Peninsula in which so many nations (including over a half-dozen Latin American ones) have an interest and presence. It also seems likely that the outcome, be it cooperative, conflictual, or mixed, will be influenced by currents of South American geopolitical thinking. There are indications that the old chauvinistic, aggressive and nationalistic geopolitical rhetoric of the past has been giving way to a current of cooperative and integrative geopolitical thinking. But even this current may lead to confrontations if it unites the South American or Latin American nations, but pits them against outside nations who also have an interest in the political and economic development of the frozen continent.

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